

## County Extension Service

# Building Self-Esteem in Children

by Debra Proctor



Left to right, Chuck Maynard, Heber City Rotary; Henry Jolley, Wasatch County School District; Debbie Proctor, USU Extension; Rod Hopkins, Mountain Community Health Choices, receive a check to support the Family Life Conference "Issues of The '90's For Youth and Families" from LaVerne Jolley with the Utah Federation For Drug-Free Youth. This Conference will be held on April 6 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the high school.

Every parent wants their child to grow up feeling confident and independent. One way to achieve this goal is to build your child's self-esteem.

Stanley Coopersmith found that there were four things that helped to build positive feelings toward self. One of these was significance. He defined this as knowing you are important to and loved by those people you feel are important in your life.

Children often decide they are important and loved by others by how they interpret what is said to them. There are some things that

we can remember as we communicate with children.

1. Try to separate the child's personality and character from the behavior. Talk about the deed or act rather than labeling the doer or actor. Let children know that you do not like the behavior, but still accept and love the child.

2. Use words to show affection and interest in the child. Often adults feel that children know of their love because of the many acts of kindness and service that are given. However, children need to be told that they are loved and appreciated.

3. Make your verbal communication match your nonverbal communication. If you are showing your child that you are interested then smile, softly touch the child, sit close to your child, and bend, kneel or sit on a chair so that you are physically more the height of the child so that eye contact can be maintained.

4. Extend invitations to your child. Ask him or her to sit next to you. Ask about your child's school day. Bring up topics that you know are of interest to the child, such as a television show or game, a past vacation, plans for a school project, etc.

5. Listen to what your child is saying. Show the child that you are listening. Most children say they can tell that the adult is listening when the adult is looking at them. Put aside your tasks for a few minutes, and give your undivided atten-

tion to what the child is telling you. Smile, nod, and make comments to let the child know you are really listening.

6. Speak courteously to children. Adults often cut short what children are saying by finishing the sentence, or answering before the child has completed his/her thought. Children are often interrupted when the adult thinks of something to be said. If it were another adult speaking, the interruption probably would not take place; or if it did then "I'm sorry" or "excuse me" would be used. These courteous phrases are too infrequently used with children.

Adults should also get in the habit of using words like "Please," and "Thank you." We adults often make many requests of children without using these terms. And yet we expect that children will learn to use them when making requests to us.

7. Take advantage of daily events. Adults and children have opportunities to talk informally at many points during the day. You do not have to plan special times to give your child positive communication messages that will build self-esteem.

The key to building children's self-esteem lies in helping them to feel respected and valued. We engage in esteem building when we communicate with children in meaningful ways.

Workshops dealing with self-esteem and other family issues will be presented during the Family Life Conference, "Issues of The '90's For Youth and Families" on Wednesday, April 6 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Wasatch High School.



# Calendar of Events

**March 22 (Wednesday)** Wasatch County Commission meet with Wallsburg residents at the Wallsburg Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.

**March 22 (Wednesday)** Central Elementary Parent/Teacher Conferences, 12 noon to 8 p.m. Call 654-0112 if you do not have a scheduled appointment.

**March 22 (Wednesday)** Central Elementary PTA Book Fair fund-raiser.

**March 24 (Friday)** Central Elementary PTA Book Fair fund-raiser.

**March 25 (Saturday)** All parents of seniors are to meet at 9 a.m. at WHS to discuss dinner/dance activity as a fund-raiser for Senior Graduating Party.

**March 25 (Saturday)** Movie "Joni" presented by Mountain Valley Baptist Chapel, 70 West 100 South, at 7 p.m. Refreshments. Public welcome. No charge.

**March 25 (Saturday)** Kid's Easter Party at FOE #3777, Midway at 2 p.m.

**March 28 (Tuesday)** Free Blood Pressure and Blood Sugar Clinic at London Springs Care Center, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Please fast 10 hours prior to blood sugar test.

**March 29 (Wednesday)** Wasatch County Commission meet with unincorporated areas in the County at the Wasatch County Commission Chambers, 7:30 p.m.

**March 29 (Wednesday)** "A Concert of Choirs" at 7 p.m. at the Wasatch High School auditorium. Tickets can be purchased from any Choralette or at the door.

**April 8 (Saturday)** Benefit dinner for Earl Wilson at 7 p.m. Lamb to be given away. Come and help.

**April 11 (Tuesday)** Men's summer softball league registration, 7 p.m. at Wasatch County Complex, 805 West 100 South.

# Fire District Submi

Heber City offered to lease its old office building to the Wasatch County Fire Protection District to house its fire engines for \$500 per month plus utilities. The District proposed a counter-offer of \$500 per month, including utilities. But even if the City accepts, the County Commission has the final say on the deal because it is up to the County to provide the funds.

Unlike the sewage disposal and garbage collection districts, which operate on user fees, the Fire Protection District is funded from tax revenue. However, a district hasn't the power to set and levy taxes. That must be done by the County Commission. Therefore, although the Fire Protection District Board operates entirely separate from the County and controls its own budget, the Commission determines the tax levy and determines the total amount of the budget.

Originally the Commission set a levy which would allow the District \$108,000 for the current year, then agreed to raise it to \$134,000. However, even the higher amount did not allow for a rental payment after Jan. 1, 1989 because the Commission was considering buying and remodeling the old City Office building in which the fire-fighting equipment already is

housed. Therefore, the District will have to submit a revised budget and hope the Commission will agree to collect additional funds to cover the rent.

Commissioner LaRen Provost, a member of the District Board, said he would ask the Commission to open the budget and collect the additional revenue. "I think we can work it out," he said.

He also reported the County is working on purchasing property for a new building to house the fire engines and ambulance. He said he expects it to be ready by September, "if all goes well."

In presenting the City's proposal, Mayor Gordon Mendenhall said the City must sell the building. He suggested that if it is sold before the new emergency services building is finished, the District might be able to negotiate an agreement with the new owners. He also said if the District and the City couldn't reach an agreement, or if the Commission would not agree to fund a budget high enough to cover rent, "we'll terminate and each go our separate ways."

Midway Mayor Eugene Probst, Chairman of the District Board, reminded Mendenhall that he asked him specifically if the building would be for rent if the County

# County to Enforce Laws

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